

Claims 1-5, 9-16, 18-35 and 57 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) over Schäfer I (U.S. Patent 5,804,256).

Schäfer I discloses a method of coating printed circuit boards.

Shafer I does not teach a metering bar positioned against an applicator. Therefore, Shafer I does not anticipate claim 1 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b). Accordingly, the rejection of claim 1 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) over Shafer I cannot stand and must be withdrawn. The Office action takes the position that the metering bar of Schafer I must be positioned against the applicator roller or it would not function in the manner intended and that “the drawings show the metering bar (4) against the applicator” (Office action, page 5, lines 5-6). In other words, the Office action substitutes a subjective interpretation for that which is expressly taught by Shafer I. At column 4, line 15 Shafer I expressly states that there is a gap between the metering bar and the applicator roller. Therefore, the Examiner’s position is untenable. If this rejection is maintained, Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner provide a citation to the legal precedent that permits the Examiner to ignore an express teaching of a reference.

Claims 2-5, 9-16, 18-35 and 57 are distinguishable over Schäfer I for at least the same reasons set forth above in distinguishing claim 1. Applicants submit, therefore, that the rejection of claims 2-5, 9-16, 18-35 and 57 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) over Schäfer I is likewise unwarranted and request that it be withdrawn.

Claims 1, 3, 9, 11-13, 16, 18-20, 25-27, 32-35 and 57 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) over Schäfer II (U.S. Patent 5,863,620).

Schäfer II discloses a process that employs a roll coating apparatus that includes metering rolls (2,4). The metering rolls are so arranged that a “narrow gap” remains between the metering roll (2,4) and the respective applicator roll (1,3).

Schäfer II does not teach a metering bar positioned against an applicator as required by claim 1. Instead, Schäfer II discloses spacing a metering roll such that a “narrow gap remains between the metering roll 2,4 and the respective applicator roll” (Schäfer II, col. 4, lines 49-52). Thus, Schäfer II lacks a required element of the apparatus of claim 1, i.e., a metering bar positioned against an applicator. Applicants

submit, therefore, that the rejection of claim 1 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) over Schäfer II is unwarranted and request that it be withdrawn.

Claims 3, 9, 11-13, 16, 18-20, 25-27, 32-35 and 57 are distinguishable over Schäfer II for at least the same reasons set forth above in distinguishing claim 1. Applicants submit, therefore, that the rejection of claims 3, 9, 11-13, 16, 18-20, 25-27, 32-35 and 57 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) over Schäfer II is likewise unwarranted and request that it be withdrawn.

Claims 1, 3, 9-16 and 18 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) over Knain (U.S. Patent 2,868,162).

Knain discloses a machine having endless belts for applying a painted coating to cylindrical articles such as electrical conduit or pipe.

The Examiner now appears to indicate that element 31 of Knain is a metering bar. However, element 31 is a roller. Applicants do not understand how element 31 anticipates the invention of claim 1. If this rejection is maintained, Applicants respectfully request clarification of the manner in which element 31 of Knain anticipates the apparatus of claim 1.

As to element 47 of Knain, element 47 functions to remove excess paint from the endless belt after the belt has applied the paint to the article to be coated. Element 47 of Knain does not meter a predetermined amount of coating composition to the applicator for transfer to an article. Element 47 also functions to remove excess paint from the “noncoating” areas of the belt. Element 47 does not contact the “working surface of the belt,” i.e., the area of the belt that carries the paint to be coated. As Knain explains:

The paint on the belt naturally tends to move toward the side edges [of the belt and that] . . . additional scraper bars 47 are used to remove any paint that might have been deposited in the undercut portions of the belts. In other words, the side edges of the belts are given under cut extensions which [sic] are used to carry off the excess paint that might build up on the edges. Hence, the working surface of the belt is that part of the belt between the undercut portions 45.

Knain, column 4, lines 52-60. Knain thus fails to teach a required element of the apparatus of claim 1. Applicants submit, therefore, that the rejection of claim 1 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) over Knain cannot stand and request that it be withdrawn.

Claims 3, 9-16 and 18 are distinguishable under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) over Knain for at least the same reasons set forth above in distinguishing claim 1. Applicants request, therefore, that the rejection of claims 3, 9-16 and 18 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) over Knain be withdrawn.

Claims 1, 9 and 12 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) over Schrauwers et al. (U.S. 5,476,545).

Schrauwers et al. disclose a rotary tile glazing and decorating machine.

Schrauwers et al. do not teach a metering bar positioned against an applicator. Therefore the rejection of claim 1 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) over Schrauwers et al. cannot stand and must be withdrawn. Applicants further note that, whether upon initiation or in the middle of the coating operation, glaze is applied to the transfer cylinder 5 Schrauwers et al. by the matrix-bearing cylinder 4 and the special device 45 after the transfer cylinder 5 has been contacted by element 16. Therefore, it cannot be said that element 16 meters a predetermined amount of a coating composition to the applicator roller for application to a substrate. Therefore the rejection of claim 1 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) over Schrauwers et al. cannot be maintained.

Claims 9 and 12 are distinguishable under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) over Schrauwers et al. for at least the same reasons set forth above in distinguishing claim 1. Applicants request, therefore, that the rejection of claims 9 and 12 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) over Schrauwers et al. be withdrawn.

Claims 1, 9 and 57 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) over Shiraishi et al. (EP 648 715).

Shiraishi et al. disclose an apparatus for manufacturing an automobile window glass with a shade band. Shiraishi et al. explain that the rubber roll 5 is supplied with the paste 2 at a constant rate by the doctor blade 6. The rubber roll 5 is flexed to an arcuate shape complementary to the bending blade 7 until one axial end 5a thereof is held in direct contact with the sheet 1 of glass.

Bending blade 7 of Shiraishi et al. impacts the way in which the composition that is already on the applicator roller is coated onto the sheet of glass. Bending blade 7 of Shiraishi et al. does not meter a predetermined amount of coating composition to the applicator for transfer to an article transported to the applicator by the conveyor as

required by claim 1. Thus, Shiraishi et al. do not teach a metering bar positioned against an applicator roller. Since Shiraishi et al. lack a required element of claim 1, the rejection of claim 1 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) over Shirashi et al. cannot stand and must be withdrawn.

Claims 9 and 57 are distinguishable under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) over Shirashi et al. for at least the same reasons set forth above in distinguishing claim 1. Applicants request, therefore, that the rejection of claims 9 and 57 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) over Shirashi et al. be withdrawn.

Claims 1, 10 and 57 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) over Rebentisch (U.S. 3,818,860).

Rebentisch discloses an applicator for applying a heated material such as a hot melt adhesive to a work piece.

Rebentisch discloses that doctor blade 6 of his apparatus reduces the adhesive to a desired thickness. Rebentisch does not teach that doctor blade 6 is positioned against an applicator. Thus, Rebentisch lacks a required element of claim 1. Accordingly, the rejection of claim 1 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) over Rebentisch cannot stand and must be withdrawn.

Claims 10 and 57 are distinguishable under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) over Rebentisch for at least the same reasons set forth above in distinguishing claim 1. Applicants request, therefore, that the rejection of claims 10 and 57 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) over Rebentisch be withdrawn.

The remaining rejections of claims 6-8 and 17 under 35 U.S.C. § 103 over Schäfer I, claim 33 under 35 U.S.C. § 103 over Schäfer I in view of Kirk Othmer, claims 2 and 4-7 under 35 U.S.C. § 103 over Schäfer II, claims 6 and 7 under 35 U.S.C. § 103 over Knain, claims 2, 3, 6 and 7 under 35 U.S.C. § 103 over Schrauwers et al., and claim 8 under 35 U.S.C. § 103 over Shirashi et al. are based upon the above-refuted premise that Schäfer I, Schäfer II, Knain, Schrauwers et al. or Shirashi et al. teach a metering bar positioned against an applicator. Since the premise on which the rejections are based has been refuted, the rejections cannot stand. Applicants request, therefore, that the rejections of claims 6-8 and 17 under 35 U.S.C. § 103 over Schäfer I, claim 33 under 35 U.S.C. § 103 over Schäfer I in view of Kirk Othmer, claims 2 and 4-7 stand rejected

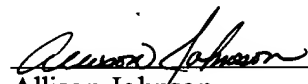
under 35 U.S.C. § 103 over Schäfer II, claims 6 and 7 under 35 U.S.C. § 103 over Knain, claims 2, 3, 6 and 7 under 35 U.S.C. § 103 over Schrauwers et al. and claim 8 under 35 U.S.C. § 103 over Shirashi et al. be withdrawn.

The claims now pending in the application are in condition for allowance and such action is respectfully requested. The Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned, Allison Johnson at 612-861-8621, if a teleconference interview would facilitate prosecution of this matter.

Please charge any additional fees owing or credit any over payments made to Deposit Account No. 501,171.

Respectfully submitted,

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